CLAIMS:

What is claimed is:

1. A method in a data processing system for managing data in a network data processing system, the method comprising:

receiving a packet containing data associated with content;

determining whether the packet is enabled for content distribution by examining the data packet; and

responsive to the packet being enabled for content distribution, distributing the content in response to a request for the content without requiring a validity check.

2. The method of claim 1, wherein the content is a Web page.

3. The method of claim 1 further comprising:

responsive to an absence of an enablement for content distribution, performing a validity check on the content in response to a request for the content.

4. The method of claim 1, wherein the data processing system is one of a cache for Web content or a proxy server.

5. The method of claim 1, wherein an indicator in the packet is used for determining whether the content is enabled for content distribution.

6. The method of claim 1, wherein the indicator is located in a header of the packet.

7. The method of claim 1, wherein the packet is transmitted using a hypertext transfer protocol.

8. A method in a data processing system for caching content, the method comprising:

receiving a data packet containing content and control information;

caching the content and control information;

responsive to a request from a requestor for the content, determining whether a particular indicator is present; and

responsive to a determination that the particular indicator is present, sending the content to the requestor without performing a validity check.

9. The method of claim 8, wherein the indicator identifies the content as being content distribution capable.

10. The method of claim 8 further comprising:

responsive to a determination that the particular indicator is absent, performing the validity check using the control information.

11. The method of claim 8, wherein the content is one of a Web page, an audio file, a text file, a program, or a video file.

12. The method of claim 8, wherein the control information follows a hypertext transfer protocol.

13. A method in a data processing system for managing content, the method comprising:

receiving a request for content from a node;

adding an indicator and control information used to cache the content in a header of a data packet, wherein the indicator is used by an enabled node to distribute the content without performing a validity check on the content;

placing the content into the data packet; and

transmitting the data packet to the node.

14. A data processing system comprising:

a bus system;

a communications unit connected to the bus system;

a memory connected to the bus system, wherein the memory includes a set of instructions; and

a processing unit connected to the bus system,

wherein the processing unit executes the set of instructions to receive a packet containing data associated with content; determine whether the packet is enabled for content distribution by examining the data packet; and distribute the content in response to a request for the content without requiring a validity check in response to the packet being enabled for content distribution.

15. A data processing system comprising:

a bus system;

a communications unit connected to the bus system;

a memory connected to the bus system, wherein the memory includes a set of instructions; and

a processing unit connected to the bus system, wherein the processing unit executes the set of instructions to receive a data packet containing content and control information; cache the content and control information; determine whether a particular indicator is present in response to a request from a requestor for the content; and send the content to the requestor without performing a validity check in response to a determination that the particular indicator is present.

16. A data processing system comprising:

a bus system;

a communications unit connected to the bus system;

a memory connected to the bus system, wherein the

memory includes a set of instructions; and

a processing unit connected to the bus system, wherein the processing unit executes the set of instructions to receive a request for content from a node; add an indicator and control information used to cache the content in a header of a data packet in which the indicator is used by an enabled node to distribute the content without performing a validity check on the content; place the content into the data packet; and transmit the data packet to the node.

17. A data processing system for managing data in a network data processing system, the data processing system comprising:

receiving means for receiving a packet containing data associated with content;

determining means for determining whether the packet is enabled for content distribution by examining the data packet; and

distributing means, responsive to the packet being enabled for content distribution, for distributing the content in response to a request for the content without requiring a validity check.

18. The data processing system of claim 17, wherein the content is a Web page.

19. The data processing system of claim 17 further

comprising:

performing means, responsive to an absence of an enablement for content distribution, for performing a validity check on the content in response to a request for the content.

20. The data processing system of claim 17, wherein the data processing system is one of a cache for Web content or a proxy server.

21. The data processing system of claim 17, wherein an indicator in the packet is used for determining whether the content is enabled for content distribution.

22. The data processing system of claim 17, wherein the indicator is located in a header of the packet.

23. The data processing system of claim 17, wherein the packet is transmitted using a hypertext transfer protocol.

24. A data processing system for caching content, the data processing system comprising:

receiving means for receiving a data packet containing content and control information;

caching means for caching the content and control information;

determining means, responsive to a request from a

requestor for the content, for determining whether a particular indicator is present; and

sending means, responsive to a determination that the particular indicator is present, for sending the content to the requestor without performing a validity check.

25. The data processing system of claim 24, wherein the indicator identifies the content as being content distribution capable.

26. The data processing system of claim 24 further comprising:

performing means, responsive to a determination that the particular indicator is absent, for performing the validity check using the control information.

27. The data processing system of claim 24, wherein the content is one of a Web page, an audio file, a text file, a program, or a video file.

28. The data processing system of claim 24, wherein the control information follows a hypertext transfer protocol.

29. A data processing system for managing content, the data processing system comprising:

receiving means for receiving a request for content from a node;

adding means for adding an indicator and control information used to cache the content in a header of a data packet, wherein the indicator is used by an enabled node to distribute the content without performing a validity check on the content;

placing means for placing the content into the data packet; and

transmitting means for transmitting the data packet to the node.

30. A computer program product for managing data in a network data processing system, the computer program product comprising:

first instructions for receiving a packet containing data associated with content;

second instructions for determining whether the packet is enabled for content distribution by examining the data packet; and

third instructions, responsive to the packet being enabled for content distribution, for distributing the content in response to a request for the content without requiring a validity check.

31. A computer program product in a data processing

system for caching content, the computer program product comprising:

first instructions for receiving a data packet containing content and control information;

second instructions for caching the content and control information;

third instructions, responsive to a request from a requestor for the content, for determining whether a particular indicator is present; and

fourth instructions, responsive to a determination that the particular indicator is present, for sending the content to the requestor without performing a validity check.

32. A computer program product for managing content, the computer program product comprising:

first instructions for receiving a request for content from a node;

second instructions for adding an indicator and control information used to cache the content in a header of a data packet, wherein the indicator is used by an enabled node to distribute the content without performing a validity check on the content;

third instructions for placing the content into the data packet; and

fourth instructions for transmitting the data packet to the node.